



AFA Orlando Keynote

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General Norty Schwartz



Thanks for your kind introduction, and thanks to everyone here for attending this year's symposium. Thanks to the Air Force Association for this event, your support of our Airmen and their families and for all you do for our Air Force. Thanks to all those whose hard work made this conference a consistently excellent showcase of the contribution America's Airmen make to our Nation's defense. I would also like to thank Secretary Donley for joining us and for his thought-provoking remarks. It is truly an honor to serve alongside you, sir--and Suzie and I are grateful for Gail and you, and we're thankful for your service and steadfast leadership. Your contributions to the Air Force go back decades, but some of the most indelible improvements are the result of your most recent efforts. The Air Force owes you a debt of gratitude for your steadiness and wisdom. Thank you for your service, for your and Gail's sacrifice and for sharing your time with us here at this important event

I think this event is important for a variety of reasons. This forum allows us to take some time away from the daily routine in Washington and elsewhere in order to renew old friendships--and to focus on our heritage, our current challenges and the future. Right here in this room, those three vital aspects of our identity as a Service converge for a brief moment in time--and I think it is important for us to stop and think about the magnitude of what we've done, what we are doing now, and what we must do in the future. I thank everyone here for sharing in this event, and for your contributions to the Global Vigilance, Reach and Power we provide for America's defense. Speaking of service, sacrifice and contributions to our defense, I would like to take a moment to recognize one of the Air Force's finest who is with us today. His name is Staff Sergeant Zach Rhyner--please stand up for us, Sergeant Rhyner--and everyone please hold your applause a moment. I have an important story to tell about Sergeant Rhyner, and I ask everyone here to give your attention to it as I focus on this young Airman for a moment. Zach is representative of America's Airmen who serve the Nation every day in the finest tradition of integrity, service and excellence. But his story is a dramatic reminder of the extraordinary work our Airmen are doing in very remote and dangerous places around



the world. He currently serves as a Special Tactics Combat Controller. I'd like to tell you about some important things he did on April 6 of last year--in a place called the Shok Valley in the remote mountains of Afghanistan.

Then-Senior Airman Rhyner was operating with his Special Forces team during a daylight rotary-wing infiltration to grab some high-value bad guys from a village high on a mountain ridge. Teams like this are an ongoing partnership between the Joint U.S. forces and Afghani Commandos who live, fight and kick ass together day and night. The team overcame near-vertical terrain to reach the outskirts of the village when all hell broke loose. The events that took place on that fateful day are almost impossible to imagine--unspeakable to such a degree that Lieutenant General John F. Mulholland, commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, described the scene by saying, "If you saw [it] in a movie, you would shake your head and say, 'That didn't happen,' ... You can't imagine the intensity and the stress these men endured for hours and days on end." The Army Staff Sergeant who was there simply called it "a nightmare... a baptism by fire." Devastating sniper, rocket-propelled grenade and machine gun fire poured down on the team from elevated and protected positions on all sides. There was only one way to wake from this nightmare, and Airman Rhyner was trained and ready -- courageously moving into position without regard for his own life, he returned fire with his rifle to cover his wounded teammates while they were extracted from the line of fire, he bravely withstood the withering hail of fire to control A-10 "Warthogs," F-15E Strike Eagles and Army attack helicopters in Danger Close air strikes. Airman Rhyner was shot three times, seriously wounded in his leg, trapped on a 60-foot cliff and under persistently heavy enemy fire, and yet he directed over 50 aerial attacks that continuously repelled the enemy during the intense six-and-a-half hour battle. The vicious fighting took its toll in the form of brutal injuries to members of the team, but Airman Rhyner's control of airstrikes returned greater devastation on the enemy, and opened a path for the team's exfiltration.

Those Special Forces Soldiers live to tell the story today because of courage, tenacity and closely integrated teamwork... including the invaluable and selfless efforts of Zachary Rhyner. The team earned an unprecedented ten Silver Stars that day for their devotion to duty and courage in the line of fire. In two weeks' time at a ceremony



in the Pentagon, I will consider it the highest personal honor to pin the Air Force Cross on Sergeant Rhyner for his bravery and heroism in the face of the enemy. Does anyone here doubt the respect for Airman a searing experience like this engenders with our joint teammates? Does anyone doubt whether our Air Force, your Air Force, is "all in"? Everyone, please join me now in a round of applause for a remarkable Airman, Staff Sergeant Zachary Rhyner.

Think of all the effects Airmen around the world orchestrated to make this story a reality. From the Strike Eagle aircrews, the maintainers on the flightline and logisticians at the depots, the intelligence professionals, satellite communications experts, munitions build-up and delivery and command-and-control leveraged through cyberspace, these Airmen are responsible for generating Global Vigilance, Reach and Power, and we could not be more proud of all they do. Thank you for being here, Zach, and thank you for your exemplary service. When I look at young Airmen like Sergeant Rhyner, I imagine what excellent deeds they will accomplish in the future--and in future years, as the Senior Airmen and Staff Sergeants of today become Chiefs, the Air Force and the Joint Team will reap the benefits of their combat-proven leadership.

An example of such leadership is with us here today, and I'd like to take a moment to recognize him, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley. Chief McKinley is an incomparable leader and an exemplary Airman. He has devoted his entire adult life to our Air Force and to taking care of Airmen and their families. Chief McKinley has accomplished so much throughout his career, but in his current role he has made monumental contributions. At the very beginning of his tenure he worked to improve the enlisted evaluation system and his efforts resulted in the first major changes to feedback and performance report forms since 1990. His advocacy of pride in being an Airman and our warrior ethos helped lead to the creation of the first Airman's Creed. Chief McKinley has always led by example with the highest personal standards and ethics. He has been a proponent of a highly skilled and educated force. He was at the forefront of implementing programs to transfer Community College of the Air Force credits toward bachelor degrees at civilian universities. He has helped care for our deployed Airmen, our Wounded Warriors and their families each and every day. It is truly bittersweet to congratulate Chief McKinley like this, as he and Paula have come to



the point in an exemplary Air Force career that the time to retire is approaching, later this summer, and we reflect on that remarkable career of service, integrity and excellence. Chief McKinley and Paula thank you for all you have done to make the Air Force, America's Airmen and our Nation's security better and stronger. Suzie and I and your Air Force owe you a great debt of gratitude for your leadership and contributions through the years. Thank you.

Now, please allow me to turn our attention to the theme of this conference. For this is a great event that provides thought-provoking opportunities to consider our contribution to winning today's fight and meeting the challenges of tomorrow. Our theme, "Cross Domain Integration: Warfare in the 21st Century," inspires thoughts on the nature of the challenges we face -- the challenge of delivering game-changing air, space and cyberspace capabilities for Combatant Commanders in an uncertain security environment. I invite everyone here to consider this on two levels of strategic thought. The first consideration is how we can innovate our ways and means in each of these three domains to provide new ways of achieving Joint commanders' objectives in the fight, or in helping prevent a fight through assurance, dissuasion or deterrence, or in building legitimacy alongside our multi-national partners in building our capacity together. The second consideration is how we can better integrate these capabilities with Joint and Interagency partners along with the command and control concepts we need to effectively and efficiently deliver effects across the domains. Perhaps this second consideration is at least equally important—maybe even more--as we think of future strategies. Even if we devise the most compelling capabilities in any given domain or form of warfare, that capability is of little benefit to us if we cannot effectively command it for our purposes in the field, or integrate that capability with a host of others to bring about our desired end-state. As we consider these strategic issues together, I invite everyone to think about this area of vital importance.

Our contribution to the Joint fight will likely depend upon the idea of integrated domain control--an idea broader than the freedom of action across domains. It is rather the ability to leverage scalable command and control capabilities across the spectrum of conflict from global to local contexts in order to exercise and ensure Joint freedom of action for the purpose of exerting control at a time and place of strategic importance.



We need more than the basic capabilities necessary to ensure freedom of action. These are surely important, but they are not sufficient for strategic purposes. Integrated domain control calls for flagship command and control capabilities that readily interface and interoperate with Joint, Interagency and multi-national partners--maximizing the contribution of our inherent Air Force attributes speed, range and flexibility in air, space and cyberspace. I challenge each of you to consider how we must innovate across the vast range of our capabilities to achieve this.

For the Air Force will be called upon in a variety of ways in the future to create a variety of effects around the globe in response to a variety of challenges in diverse strategic contexts. But the one constant in every single one of these scenarios is the need for command and control of these and other Joint capabilities. It doesn't matter if we are talking humanitarian assistance, global mobility, aeromedical evacuation, ISR, special operations, or major theater conflict contests for air, space or cyberspace superiority. Scalable, reliable, and interoperable command and control forms the foundation for success in each and every case. America's Air Force is poised to leverage both the capabilities and cooperation necessary to ensure we deliver world-class integrated domain control in any context. We should expect nothing less as we continue to innovate in providing Global Vigilance, Reach and Power for the Nation. This compelling need exists even as we face new constraints on our resources, and we all realize that a new period of austerity is dawning. An austerity that some experts compare to the greatest our Nation has faced in our history. Our soon to be released Air Force climate survey suggests austerity will intensify the strain and demands on our people and our operations, but does it limit our ability to innovate our ways and means? I'd like to take a few minutes to share a few thoughts on this challenge

As I see it, all of us here, in uniform or out, have a duty to promote innovation . Some would have us believe that cutting-edge innovation directly correlates with resources and funding, and that a downturn in resource allocation causes a reduced capacity to innovate or to imagine. I do not believe this is the case now, or that it has ever been true. For history is loaded with examples of some of mankind's greatest innovations that occurred in times of austerity. In fact, in many cases austerity created the necessities that became the mother of revolutionary inventions. I ask you to



consider one such innovation that changed the world forever. The technology known as “moveable type” was as revolutionary as the internet we enjoy today, if not more so. While there exists some scholarly debate over this invention’s origins, modern consensus credits Johann Gutenberg with this discovery. But if you visit the tiny city of Haarlem in the Netherlands, you will see old statues and monuments that claim to know the tale based upon old historic manuscripts. They cite evidence that Gutenberg’s mid-15th Century printing press benefited from humble early-15th Century Dutch innovation. No one can say for certain where the idea originated, but if you ask the Dutch, it all started with the most unlikely of words from the most unlikely of voices--"Look, Grandfather! See what the letters have done!"

These were the words of a young boy as he played with the small pieces of bark carved for him by his grandfather, Laurence Coster. In their humble austerity the family could not afford to buy toys for the children, so the elderly Coster used his skill to carve playthings from soft tree bark for them. On some of the toys, he carved out letters, and the young boy noticed the imprint created when he pressed the bark into the sand--a mirror-image of the letters was left on the ground. Coster reasoned that he could use this process to teach the children how to read, and set about carving more letters in individual pieces to help them form various words. And as the story goes, he refined the process of forming the letters, the material he carved them from, and the ink and paper he would eventually use -- until Coster had formed the fundamental basis for printing whole books with a crude form of moveable type. According to the story, this culminated with him printing several books years later. And shortly thereafter, the knowledge of these early inventions made their way to Strasbourg and Mainz where Johann Gutenberg would refine and perfect them in their industrial form -- yielding his now-famous Gutenberg Bible through a process that changed everything. Mystery shrouds the way in which Gutenberg made his discovery and whether the Dutch version of events is real or apocryphal. But the fundamental lesson is the same, for the concept of pressing and imprinting had been around since the seventh century as Chinese scribes worked with carved images in similar fashion. The phenomenal technology that changed Western Society in the Middle Ages, and led to centuries of reformation and enlightenment was not the product of vast sums of investment or the result of a national



effort, but rather the humble and unexpected work by entrepreneurial common folks thinking up new solutions to old problems. I think little has changed today. Regardless of resource constraints, thinking is still free. Austerity is not our enemy, the inability to think creatively and ask hard, perhaps uncomfortable, questions is. We must continue to work together to ensure innovation lives on. It is up to us as leaders to encourage, promote and foster free thinking and the very best ideas regardless of their origin.

This is why Secretary Donley and I joined together to promote our mutual message on diversity. That fundamental emphasis seeks to empower the very best ideas without regard to the occupational tribe or demographics of origin. A vivid scene from a tale that comes down to us through history from ancient Greece illustrates this point.

The story is set in ancient Athens during the Golden Age of Pericles--the most brilliant period of Greek art and literature. The city shined like a beacon to the whole world, beckoning civilization to join the pursuit of the betterment of mankind through beauty and the power of ideas. But as the night fell and the citizens retired from their daily activity, one man's labor had not ended, but had just begun in earnest. He quietly slipped into the basement of his home to secretly begin another night's work. He was a master artist who worshiped nothing but beauty, and he didn't feel fatigue at all as he pursued his passion of sculpture in the middle of the night. But why was this artist hiding? Why did he conceal his masterpieces? Why did he labor in secret by candlelight at midnight? The reason is this: he was a slave, and Athenian law decreed that only free men could exercise in the arts, and the penalty for his pursuit of sculpture was death.

But Creon was the son of a genius stoneworker--he could think of nothing except freeing beautiful figures from their marble confinement. He continued his work even as the law sought to keep the artist's chisel in the hands of society's elite. He worked by night aided by his sister who kept the candles burning, covering the doors and bringing him food as he worked through the night. Through the many nights of hidden labor he completed his collection of statues, ready in time for the art festival in the Agora where all the greatest works of Athens would be displayed and judged--with the greatest works to be selected by General Pericles himself--the first citizen of Athens--and ruler of the



people. Every artist sought Pericles' attention and praise... for the greatest art works would yield immortality for the artist--the reward that came with a crown crafted from olive branches. The Agora festival was unlike any other scene in the ancient world. Pericles sat in regal estate surrounded by the finest poets, philosophers and artists the world had known and the most modern thinkers of nascent sciences. The works of the contestants were brought before the leaders and placed on display, surrounding the court on every side--paintings and statues, exquisite in their detail, perfect in their finish. A wondrous display of artwork crafted to earn the admiration of the crowd--and the criticism of rivals--by artists seeking cheers from the crowds of onlookers who flocked like sports fans to see who would win the crown.

But among these amazing masterpieces, one group of statues so surpassed all the others that the collective attention of the vast assembly was riveted upon these few marvelous works of stone. "Who sculpted this group here?" the Ruler of Athens demanded. Eyes filled with envy searched the crowd for the proud artist who should jump forward with a shout at any moment. No one came forward; no one answered the king. Silence. The court was gripped by the mystery. The crowd of free citizens filled with murmurs and whispers. Who could it be? What artist would not come forward immediately? Could these be the work of the gods? Or even more unthinkable--could they be the work of a *slave*? As the crowd continued to search for an answer, a commotion rose on the far edge of the crowd.

Two officers dragged a woman through the masses as she cried out. They brought her to Pericles and reported that witnesses said that this woman knew the identity of the sculptor, but that she refused to speak. Pericles spoke next saying, "The law is imperative, so we have no other choice. Take this woman to the dungeon as the law requires." Just then, Creon ran out from the crowd and threw himself on the ground before the king as he begged loudly, "Please, sir! Forgive and save this woman! She is my sister, and she is silent to protect me. I am the culprit. These sculptures are the work of my hands... the hands of a slave." The astonished crowd bristled with outrage. Shouts of "to the dungeon with the slave!" and "death to the criminal!" fill the Agora as the angry citizens get louder and louder. Pericles stood and faced the crowd. "As I live, no!" declared the king, "Not to the dungeon, but to my side bring the youth. The gods



have used that group of sculptures to reveal to us that there is something higher in Greece than an unjust law. The highest purpose of justice should be the development of the beautiful and the discovery of truth--and this is the decision. To the sculptor who fashioned these give the victor's crown." The crowd's jeers turned to applause as the queen lifted Creon to his feet and placed the Crown of Olives upon his head. In that moment the barrier erected by man's law was demolished in order to achieve the finest merits of which mankind is capable.

America has long viewed itself as a modern-day Athens. Our hearts are filled with pride as we see signs all around us that old barriers have been torn down so that people can achieve their full potential regardless of their race, culture or tribe. The fact that I stand before you today and the events of January 20th are particularly notable in this regard. We must continue this process in America's Air Force for our vitality, for our effectiveness and because--because it is *right*.

We must foster a culture of merit that fuels innovation with the very best ideas regardless of their origin, or with whom the ideas originate. It is only through this process of discovery and promotion that we will poise ourselves to meet the challenges of tomorrow. For the future security environment will demand unprecedented thinking and cooperative action through collaboration with others. This is our challenge in our ongoing efforts to train and develop future leaders. Future challenges will require Airmen who are comfortable with complexity, collaboration, continuous learning, courageous innovation and the ability to jettison obsolescent ideas. I look to you here to help our institutions identify the specific qualities and attributes in the various fields of endeavor, and I thank you for contributing to the body of knowledge that will doubtlessly propel our Airmen, present and future, to victory. We must never underestimate the need for Airmen who are ready and able to contribute to Joint, Interagency and Coalition successes. Achievements in conventional challenges are the work of brilliance, but achievements in future challenges will be the work of collaborative genius. This is the price of admission in the foreseeable future of our Nation's military instrument. Future leaders will have to develop and rely on collaborative genius in order to be fully successful members of the national security team. I thank each of you here endeavoring to develop those attributes of collaboration in yourselves, in each other,



and those that will follow us. This symposium is an important part of that effort--let's get on with it. Thank you for allowing me to join you today